

## CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented) A winch for cargo tie-down straps to tie down straps comprising:  
a winch frame having a frame securing segment and a pair of integrally extending flanges;  
a winch drum rotatably mounted between said flanges;  
a pawl and ratchet mechanism attached at a longitudinal end of said winch frame;  
a fixed gear extending from an opposed longitudinal end of said winch drum;  
a free gear extending axially from said fixed gear;  
a worm gear mounted within a worm gear frame for driving a driving disc, said driving disc being adapted to selectively engage said fixed and free gears, depending on the positioning of said worm gear frame relative to a worm gear frame mounting assembly extending from said winch frame.

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) An independent tightening module to operate on a standard winch comprising:  
a worm drive cooperating with a worm gear, and a bolt actuating said worm drive;  
a key stem configured and sized to interface with a lock found on a standard winch;  
a "J" lock on said tightening module to engage the [a] flange of said standard winch;  
~~, a worm drive, a worm gear, and a bolt.~~  
said key stem is configured polygonally and sized to interface with a polygonal lock welded onto a standard winch;  
a circular key stem adaptor configured and sized to fit over said polygonal key stem

and said circular key stem adaptor configured and sized for a circular lock;  
said circular key stem adaptor having a key adaptor hole through which is inserted a  
pin passing through an existing lock hole.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) An independent tightening module to operate on a standard winch as in claim [[5]] [3] wherein:

    said pin having a head and a body and said head being diametrically larger than said body so that said smaller body can fit through said circular key stem adaptor.

7. (currently amended) An independent tightening module to operate on a standard winch as in claim [[5]] [3] having the following method of use:

    Inserting said circular key stem adaptor over said polygonal key stem;

    inserting said circular key stem adaptor into said circular lock;

    aligning said holes with a key adaptor hole;

    Inserting said pin into said key adaptor hole.

8. (canceled)